

An Evaluation of the 12 Values among Students in Northern Thailand

Natthapol Jaengaksorn¹, Sareeya Chotitham²,
Suwimon Wongwanich³

Faculty of Education, Chiang Mai University¹

Faculty of Education, Naresuan University²

Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University³

E-mail: beer_upper@hotmail.com¹

E-mail: sareeyach@gmail.com²

E-mail: suwimon.w@chula.ac.th³

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to: 1) examine students' perceptions towards the 12 values of Thai students in northern Thai basic, vocational, and higher education institutions; and 2) examine the practice of the 12 values of Thai students in these institutions. A sample of 2,288 students in these educational institutions were chosen through multi-stage random sampling. The research instrument was the students' perceptions towards and practice of the 12 values questionnaire. Data were analysed by frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation.

This study found that 1) students' perceptions towards the 12 values were (a) most students knew the 12 values; (b) most students were able to recognize all the values; and (c) most students agreed that Thai students must perform all the 12 values and 2) in general, the third value, which is being grateful to parents, guardians and teachers, was achieved by most students. The first value - upholding the nation, the religious values and the Monarchy - and the fourth value - seeking knowledge and education directly and indirectly - were practiced respectively. On the contrary, the twelfth value - dedicating oneself to the public and the national benefit rather than to one's own benefit - was performed least.

KEYWORDS: Evaluation, 12 Values, Students, Thailand

Introduction

Society constantly changes, so does people's way of life. Technology has reached a high level of advancement that it significantly affects human behaviour either physically or mentally. The Internet, for example, has now made possible things that most people never even imagined in the past. Today, people can get connected "visually face-to-face" with anyone from faraway places through social media. It has also opened up free access to a limitless amount of information from global sources. This definitely brings advantages for the population of the world, including Thai people, that it can help them achieve their day-to-day or long-term goals. (Bellanca & Brandt, 2013)

However, these advances in the development of civilization, inevitably, do not come without consequences. Many of the younger generation have changed and maintain values that do not conform to Thai culture. Thanks to the convenience and limitless access to information that technology provides, Thai people think in a more practical and business- and self-oriented way, for e.g. they tend to search short and practical answers from the internet with arguable validity rather than reading books. They are busy in their virtual world rather than caring for their surroundings. They also follow and copy foreign habits and behaviour. In addition, they freely adopt the culture and moral behaviour that they see on the Internet

or television while neglecting their own. (Chareonwongsak, 2003; Bellanca & Brandt, 2013) For the development of Thailand, the education of the people of the country is of paramount importance. Therefore, the quality education cannot be compromised so as to keep the issue under control. Thai people need educational practice that prepares students to be able to maintain their own national identity and at the same time remain flexible to the global development. It needs to make sure that the basic goals of education as summarized in the National Education Act are accomplished. Section 6, in Chapter 1 of the act, elaborates six aspects of Thai education and says that, "Education shall aim at the full development of the Thai people in all aspects: 1) physical and mental health; 2) intellectual health; 3) knowledge; 4) morality; 5) integrity; and 6) desirable way of life so as to be able to live in harmony with other people" (Chareonwongsak, 2003).

The Thai government has been working hard to ensure the attainment of educational goals amidst global development. Thai General Prayuth Chan-ocha, a Head of National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) informed the people in his televised public program "Return Happiness broadcasted on July 11th, 2014 that the core values of the Thai people should be clearly defined in order that the people could build a strong nation. He also said that to reach that goal, people need to improve themselves. Since then

“the 12 values” has been officially established as the national policy by the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO). The 12 values include “1) upholding the three main pillars of the country: the nation, the religion, and the monarchy; 2) being honest, sacrificial and patient with a positive attitude for the common good of the public; 3) being grateful and obedient to parents, guardians and teachers; 4) seeking both direct and indirect knowledge and education; 5) preserving Thai traditions and culture; 6) practicing morality, integrity, considerateness, generosity, and sharing; 7) understanding and learning true democratic ideals with His Majesty the King as Head of State; 8) maintaining discipline and respect for laws and the elderly; 9) being conscious and mindful of one's actions in line with His Majesty the King's royal statements; 10) practicing the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy of His Majesty the King (Rama IX); 11) Maintaining both physical and mental health against dark forces or desires; and 12) dedicating oneself to the public and national benefit rather than to one's own benefit” (Suksap, 2014). Obviously, the 12 values are considered the main principle of practice for Thai people in order to achieve full development in all aspects: physical and mental health; intellect; knowledge; morality; integrity; and a desirable way of life so as to be able to live in harmony with other people.

The publication of the 12 values according to the policy of NCPO has

proceeded right after the General Prayuth Chan-ocha's statement was released. The Ministry of Education has assigned schools to promote these 12 values for students at all levels and to encourage them to practice these values on a regular basis. In this study, the researchers aim to examine students' perceptions towards and the practice of the 12 values after the policy adoption in order to utilize the finding as a basis for the development and improvement of crucial values or attributes to students.

Review of Related Literature and Research

The Definition of Value

According to The Royal Institute Dictionary (2013), “value” is defined as, “something that people or society attaches great importance to, while making any decision, and that may influence people's behaviour.” In addition the definition, according to social psychology, “value” refers to the mores of society (Uwanno, 1992). Rokeach (1973, as cited in Wongwanich et al., 2017) proposes that “values” are the beliefs appreciated by people in society as a guideline or goal of life, which is worth practice, and is an ethical matter. This value is generally perceived in many different ways depending on personal beliefs (intra-personal) or society-cantered, and consequently people behave towards the same things in different ways. In other words, many scholars agree that values are a guide to attitudes and behaviours according

to the social context (Wells, 2011 as cited in Wongwanich et al., 2017).

The study is carried out as a part of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the 12 values policy of the government as conducted in all regions in Thailand. In this study, “value”, therefore, is defined as, the belief, treated by people as a social norm indicating that those who follow these norms are regarded as “good” or socially acceptable. In monitoring the promotion of the 12 values as the core values of Thai people, are defined in two respects: the belief system that is the main anchor in life; and the behaviour that reflects the ethics of practitioners, that is, related to the values determined by society.

The 12 Values Enhancement

After the 12 values were announced by General Prayuth Chan-ocha, the Office of the Permanent Secretary of the Education Ministry immediately planned to implement the 12 core Thai values into the education reform roadmap consisting of 3 phases. The first phase is aimed at providing correct knowledge and understanding of the 12 values and also building people’s awareness of the values, particularly children and young people. All Thais, through the 3 main projects, which are intended to execute the goals, should be aware of these core values. The first project is aimed at providing basic knowledge and building awareness of the 12 values in the target group, by publishing books to promote the 12 values. The second project

was conducted to advertise and promote the 12 values continually by means of publishing articles about the 12 values in newspapers, and other media. The last project of the first phase is mostly about creative media. Students may be asked to take part in an essay competition related to these 12 values. In the second phase, the government implements the project that aims to integrate the 12 values into the educational curriculum. The main project in the third phase is launched to follow up, evaluate, and report the result of the policy implementation. The Ministry of Education will seek to find schools where they have done much to promote the 12 values. These schools would be given an award and promoted as model schools.

The Office of Basic Education Commission: OBEC, ministry of Education sent the official letter to every Office of Education Service Area in Thailand about the principle and practice of the 12 values, informing that all institutions were assigned to integrate and merge the 12 values into the learning management of students. The schools have to continuously provide concrete and practical learning activities to the young in order to instil these values into their heart and to implement them in their daily life. Moreover, students at each level will be involved in different kinds of activities and be taught using different methods, according to the age and potential of the learners. The schools, additionally, are required to

supervise the project implementation, and raise the awareness of the 12 core values in educational agencies through various ways such as poetry, training, learning history and civic duty, making short films to encourage the students to uphold good morals and discipline, and so forth. Another important mission of all schools, moreover, is to incorporate the core values into teaching especially history and civic duty subjects, which is aimed at cultivating morality and ethics to the students and instilling them to adhere to the nation, religion teaching and the monarchy (conclusions of the Strategic Planning Committee's meeting on the practice principles of 12 core values, 2014).

Research Objectives

1. To examine students' perceptions towards the 12 values of Thai students in northern Thai educational institutions.
2. To examine the practice of the 12 values of Thai students in these educational institutions.

Methodology

Population and Samples

The study was conducted with a population of 1,110,372 Thai students in northern educational institutions. It consisted of 840,938 students in basic education levels (elementary education, lower secondary

education, and upper secondary education), 85,205 students in vocational education (vocational certificate, and high vocational certificate), and 184,229 students in higher education level (bachelor degree) (Ministry of Education, 2014). Then, Yamane's formula (1970) was employed to determine the appropriate sample size, resulting at least 1,105 student participants, with a 3% degree of error. Finally, there were 2,288 participants in the study.

The sample of this study was decided through a multi-stage random sampling method. Firstly, a cluster random sampling strategy was used to choose 4 target provinces out of 17 provinces in the northern region that, considering their geographic location, included Lampang, Nan, Uttaradit, and Phitsanulok. Secondly, a stratified random sampling strategy was used to select 24 institutions from the target provinces comprising primary schools, secondary schools, vocational and higher vocational schools, and universities. Lastly, students from 24 institutions were chosen to participate in the study.

Following the sampling process, questionnaires were sent to all institutions to a total of 2,880 students. However, 2,288 questionnaires (79.44%) were returned. Therefore, the samples of this study comprised 2,288 students (close to the appropriate sample size), as shown in table 1.

Table 1 The samples in the study

| Provinces | Students | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| | Basic Education | | | Vocational Education | | Higher Education | Total |
| | Elementary | Junior High School | Senior High School | Vocational Certificate | High Vocational Certificate | | |
| Lampang | 110 (120) | 85 (120) | 109 (120) | 80 (120) | 75 (120) | 102 (120) | 561 (720) |
| Nan | 114 (120) | 96 (120) | 105 (120) | 85 (120) | 80 (120) | 100 (120) | 590 (720) |
| Uttaradit | 112 (120) | 80 (120) | 107 (120) | 75 (120) | 77 (120) | 98 (120) | 549 (720) |
| Phitsanulok | 115 (120) | 94 (120) | 117 (120) | 69 (120) | 82 (120) | 111 (120) | 588 (720) |
| Total | 451 (480) | 355 (480) | 438 (480) | 319 (480) | 314 (480) | 411 (480) | 2,288 (2,880) |
| 2,288 (79.44%) respondents | | | | | | | |

Note: The number in the parenthesis () presents the number of questionnaires sent to the institutions. The number outside the parenthesis () presents the number of responded questionnaires.

Research Instruments

The data in this study were collected by a questionnaire with initially used in Wongwanich et al. (2017). The questionnaire inquires about student perceptions towards the 12 core values of Thai students and their practice of these values. There are two sections in the questionnaires. The first section consists of eight items with 0 (NO) - 1 (YES) scoring system. The second section consists of 12 questions with 3 rating scale.

In order to meet content validity, the two questionnaires were reviewed and assessed by five experts using IOC analysis. All question items passed the content validity criteria with a score above 0.05.

The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the questionnaires ranged from 0.97 to 0.99. Below are some samples from the questionnaire on students' perceptions towards the 12 core values, followed by those on students' practice of the 12 values.

Samples from the questionnaire on students' perceptions towards the 12 core values:

- "Do you know the 12 values of Thai people?"
- "Can you remember all the values?"
- "Do you agree that all Thai students have to practice the 12 values?"
- "Do you think that practicing the 12 value is difficult?"

Samples from the questionnaire on students' practice of the 12 core values:

- "Upholding the three main pillars of the country: the nation, the religion, and the monarchy"
- "Being honest, sacrificial and patient with positive attitude for the common good of the public"
- "Being grateful and obedient to parents, guardians and teachers"

Data Analysis

Data were analysed by frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation.

Result

Background of the Participants

The number of participants in each level was similar. The highest number went to elementary level, with 451 participants, followed by upper secondary level with 438 students, and high vocational certificate with 314 students. The samples in this study were mostly female with 1,481 students (64.70%). All students were able to inquire of their teachers if they had any questions about the questionnaires.

A GPA of 3.00-3.49 was achieved by 806 students (32.92%), followed by a GPA of 2.50-2.99, achieved by 651 students (28.50%). In other words, the samples throughout all educational levels shared similar characteristics.

1. Result of Student Perceptions of the 12 Values of Thai Students

The research found that the majority of students acknowledged the 12 core values of Thai students (in total 95.50% but students in high vocational certificate and bachelor degree levels acknowledged less than other levels) and more than half of them were able to recognize all the values (in total 54.50% but students in high vocational certificate and bachelor degree levels were able to recognize all the values less than other levels). They also agreed that Thai students have to perform all 12 values (in total 88.00% but students in high vocational certificate and bachelor degree levels agreed that Thai students have to perform all 12 values less than other levels) since they thought that the practice of the 12 values was not difficult (in total 73.90% but students in vocational certificate and high vocational certificate thought that the practice of the 12 values was not difficult less than other level). In addition, most students attempted to perform all the values (in total 81.50%), and they are taught to practice the 12 values by their teachers and parents as well (in total 85.00% and 77.10% respectively). Lastly they acknowledged school as a place to access the 12 values (in total 63.20%). The finding is further elaborated in table 2 below.

Table 2 The students' perceptions towards the 12 values of Thai students

| Item | Elementary | | Lower Secondary | | Upper Secondary | | Vocational Certificate | | High 0.93 Vocational Certificate | | Bachelor Degree | | Total | |
|---|------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-----------------|--------|------------------------|--------|----------------------------------|--------|-----------------|--------|-------|--------|
| | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % | n | % |
| Acknowledged the 12 values of Thai students | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| yes | 433 | 96.00 | 351 | 98.90 | 436 | 99.50 | 306 | 95.90 | 292 | 93.00 | 367 | 89.30 | 2185 | 95.50 |
| no | 18 | 4.00 | 4 | 1.10 | 2 | 0.50 | 13 | 4.10 | 22 | 7.00 | 44 | 10.70 | 103 | 4.50 |
| total | 451 | 100.00 | 355 | 100.00 | 438 | 100.00 | 319 | 100.00 | 314 | 100.00 | 411 | 100.00 | 2288 | 100.00 |
| Be able to recognize all the values | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| all | 310 | 68.70 | 243 | 68.50 | 289 | 66.00 | 189 | 59.20 | 131 | 41.70 | 84 | 20.40 | 1246 | 54.50 |
| some | 134 | 29.70 | 111 | 31.30 | 143 | 32.60 | 122 | 38.20 | 170 | 54.10 | 279 | 67.90 | 959 | 41.90 |
| not at all | 7 | 1.60 | 1 | 0.30 | 6 | 1.40 | 8 | 2.50 | 13 | 4.10 | 48 | 11.70 | 83 | 3.60 |
| total | 451 | 100.00 | 355 | 100.00 | 438 | 100.00 | 319 | 100.00 | 314 | 100.00 | 411 | 100.00 | 2288 | 100.00 |
| Agreed that Thai students have to perform all 12 values | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| disagree | 53 | 11.80 | 25 | 7.00 | 48 | 11.00 | 46 | 14.40 | 73 | 23.20 | 29 | 7.10 | 274 | 12.00 |
| neutral | 144 | 31.90 | 142 | 40.00 | 219 | 50.00 | 155 | 48.60 | 167 | 53.20 | 190 | 46.20 | 1017 | 44.40 |
| agree | 254 | 56.30 | 188 | 53.00 | 171 | 39.00 | 118 | 37.00 | 74 | 23.60 | 192 | 46.70 | 997 | 43.60 |
| total | 451 | 100.00 | 355 | 100.00 | 438 | 100.00 | 319 | 100.00 | 314 | 100.00 | 411 | 100.00 | 2288 | 100.00 |
| Thought that the practice of the 12 values was not difficult | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| yes | 118 | 26.20 | 58 | 16.30 | 102 | 23.30 | 108 | 33.90 | 107 | 34.10 | 105 | 25.50 | 598 | 26.10 |
| no | 333 | 73.80 | 297 | 83.70 | 336 | 76.70 | 211 | 66.10 | 207 | 65.90 | 306 | 74.50 | 1690 | 73.90 |
| total | 451 | 100.00 | 355 | 100.00 | 438 | 100.00 | 319 | 100.00 | 314 | 100.00 | 411 | 100.00 | 2288 | 100.00 |
| Attempted to perform all the values | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| yes | 385 | 85.40 | 293 | 82.50 | 383 | 87.40 | 254 | 79.60 | 242 | 77.10 | 307 | 74.70 | 1864 | 81.50 |
| no | 66 | 14.60 | 62 | 17.50 | 55 | 12.60 | 65 | 20.40 | 72 | 22.90 | 104 | 25.30 | 424 | 18.50 |
| total | 451 | 100.00 | 355 | 100.00 | 438 | 100.00 | 319 | 100.00 | 314 | 100.00 | 411 | 100.00 | 2288 | 100.00 |
| Teachers taught students to perform the 12 values | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| yes | 406 | 90.00 | 322 | 90.70 | 398 | 90.90 | 279 | 87.50 | 255 | 81.20 | 284 | 69.10 | 1944 | 85.00 |
| no | 45 | 10.00 | 33 | 9.00 | 40 | 9.10 | 40 | 12.50 | 59 | 18.80 | 127 | 30.90 | 344 | 15.00 |
| total | 451 | 100.00 | 355 | 100.00 | 438 | 100.00 | 319 | 100.00 | 314 | 100.00 | 411 | 100.00 | 2288 | 100.00 |
| Parents taught students to perform the 12 values | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| yes | 363 | 80.50 | 280 | 78.90 | 367 | 83.80 | 259 | 81.20 | 245 | 78.00 | 250 | 60.80 | 1764 | 77.10 |
| no | 88 | 19.50 | 75 | 21.10 | 71 | 16.20 | 60 | 18.80 | 69 | 21.90 | 161 | 39.20 | 524 | 22.90 |
| total | 451 | 100.00 | 355 | 100.00 | 438 | 100.00 | 319 | 100.00 | 314 | 100.00 | 411 | 100.00 | 2288 | 100.00 |
| Crucial resources to access the 12 values | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| school | 338 | 74.90 | 246 | 69.50 | 306 | 69.90 | 188 | 58.90 | 185 | 59.10 | 180 | 44.00 | 1443 | 63.20 |
| parents | 23 | 5.10 | 9 | 2.50 | 7 | 1.60 | 8 | 2.50 | 15 | 4.80 | 17 | 4.20 | 79 | 3.50 |
| television | 20 | 4.40 | 35 | 9.90 | 60 | 13.70 | 63 | 19.70 | 39 | 12.50 | 88 | 21.50 | 305 | 13.40 |
| internet | 48 | 10.60 | 41 | 11.60 | 58 | 13.20 | 50 | 15.70 | 53 | 16.90 | 111 | 27.10 | 361 | 15.80 |
| newspaper | 22 | 4.90 | 23 | 6.50 | 6 | 1.40 | 9 | 2.80 | 21 | 6.70 | 12 | 2.90 | 93 | 4.10 |
| etc. | 0 | 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 0.20 | 1 | 0.30 | 0 | 0.00 | 1 | 0.20 | 3 | 0.10 |
| total | 451 | 100.00 | 355 | 100.00 | 438 | 100.00 | 319 | 100.00 | 314 | 100.00 | 411 | 100.00 | 2288 | 100.00 |

2. Result in the Practice of the 12 Values of Thai Students

According to the analysis on behavioural level, the result demonstrated that all levels of students performed all the 12 values (mean values ranging from 0.76 to 0.86). It also showed that the third value, “being grateful and obedient to parents, guardians and teachers” was achieved the most by students (M = 0.86, S.D. = 0.263), followed by the first value “upholding the three main pillars of the country: the nation, the religion, and the monarchy” (M = 0.84, S.D. = 0.267). On the contrary, the twelfth value “dedicating oneself to the public and the national benefit rather than to one’s own benefit” (M = 0.76, S.D. = 0.324) and the tenth value “practicing the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy of His Majesty the

King” were performed least (M = 0.76, S.D. = 0.333).

Regarding students’ educational level, the students in elementary level exercised the 12 values more than those at other levels (mean values above 0.83). Moreover, the third value “being grateful and obedient to parents, guardians and teachers” was appreciated the most by elementary students (M = 0.93, S.D. = 0.254), followed by the first value “upholding the three main pillars of the country: the nation, the religion, and the monarchy” (M = 0.90, S.D. = 0.223) and the fourth value “seeking both direct and indirect knowledge and education” (M = 0.90, S.D. = 0.233). On the other hand, high vocational certificate students performed the 12 values the least (M = 0.66-0.74, S.D. = 0.336-0.382.). The finding is shown in table 3.

Table 3 The practice of the 12 values of Thai students

| The values | Elementary | | Lower Secondary | | Upper Secondary | | Vocational Certificate | | High Vocational Certificate | | Bachelor Degree | | Total | |
|--|------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. |
| Upholding the three main pillars of the country: the nation, the religion, and the monarchy | 0.90 | 0.223 | 0.94 | 0.164 | 0.87 | 0.223 | 0.80 | 0.282 | 0.72 | 0.347 | 0.80 | 0.286 | 0.84 | 0.267 |
| Being honest, sacrificial and patient with positive attitude for the common good of the public | 0.88 | 0.231 | 0.85 | 0.264 | 0.86 | 0.265 | 0.83 | 0.276 | 0.74 | 0.336 | 0.80 | 0.295 | 0.83 | 0.283 |

Table 3 The practice of the 12 values of Thai students (continued)

| The values | Elementary | | Lower Secondary | | Upper Secondary | | Vocational Certificate | | High Vocational Certificate | | Bachelor Degree | | Total | |
|---|------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. |
| Being grateful and obedient to parents, guardians and teachers | 0.93 | 0.254 | 0.91 | 0.215 | 0.90 | 0.226 | 0.84 | 0.277 | 0.74 | 0.337 | 0.83 | 0.268 | 0.86 | 0.263 |
| Seeking both direct and indirect knowledge and education | 0.90 | 0.233 | 0.81 | 0.302 | 0.85 | 0.281 | 0.76 | 0.334 | 0.70 | 0.372 | 0.75 | 0.328 | 0.80 | 0.314 |
| Preserving Thai traditions and culture | 0.83 | 0.324 | 0.88 | 0.244 | 0.85 | 0.282 | 0.78 | 0.315 | 0.70 | 0.373 | 0.76 | 0.347 | 0.80 | 0.325 |
| Practicing morality, integrity, consideration, generosity, and sharing | 0.86 | 0.274 | 0.85 | 0.245 | 0.85 | 0.273 | 0.75 | 0.336 | 0.70 | 0.382 | 0.79 | 0.316 | 0.81 | 0.304 |
| Understanding and learning true democratic ideals with His Majesty the King as Head of State | 0.88 | 0.256 | 0.84 | 0.255 | 0.86 | 0.263 | 0.78 | 0.336 | 0.67 | 0.373 | 0.81 | 0.286 | 0.81 | 0.305 |
| Maintaining discipline and respect for laws and the elderly | 0.89 | 0.257 | 0.88 | 0.226 | 0.86 | 0.264 | 0.77 | 0.317 | 0.67 | 0.382 | 0.81 | 0.307 | 0.82 | 0.309 |
| Being conscious and mindful of one's actions in line with His Majesty the King's royal statements | 0.87 | 0.257 | 0.82 | 0.276 | 0.80 | 0.304 | 0.75 | 0.327 | 0.66 | 0.363 | 0.70 | 0.346 | 0.77 | 0.314 |
| Practicing the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy of His Majesty the King | 0.87 | 0.265 | 0.83 | 0.264 | 0.77 | 0.324 | 0.73 | 0.348 | 0.63 | 0.373 | 0.68 | 0.366 | 0.76 | 0.333 |

Table 3 The practice of the 12 values of Thai students (continued)

| The values | Elementary | | Lower Secondary | | Upper Secondary | | Vocational Certificate | | High Vocational Certificate | | Bachelor Degree | | Total | |
|--|------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. | M | S.D. |
| Maintaining both physical and mental health against the dark force or desires | 0.86 | 0.278 | 0.80 | 0.274 | 0.81 | 0.297 | 0.77 | 0.318 | 0.65 | 0.363 | 0.76 | 0.326 | 0.78 | 0.314 |
| Dedicating oneself to the public and the national benefit rather than to one's own benefit | 0.85 | 0.298 | 0.81 | 0.284 | 0.76 | 0.308 | 0.73 | 0.319 | 0.67 | 0.373 | 0.72 | 0.366 | 0.76 | 0.324 |

Note: *Each value rates 1 point

Discussion

The Students' Perceptions towards the 12 Values of Thai Students

The study found that teachers attached great importance to all 12 values, and attempted to encourage students to perform all values. Since the students were well informed of the core values mostly by their teachers, they were able to acknowledge the values and become familiar with them as a whole. Therefore, the place where students are initially taught the 12 values is in school by their teachers. The study revealed that most students acknowledge the 12 values, and they considered school as a crucial place to access them, however with many students, the 12 values are reinforced by their parents. This finding is congruent with the report of the previous study by Akkaramathayut, Kramnaimuaeng, and Puentong (2016),

which was carried out to investigate the implementation of the 12 values policy into basic educational institution practice.

The Practice of the 12 Values of Thai Students

The research finding shows that most students behave according to the 12 values in their daily life. The third value "being grateful and obedient to parents, guardians and teachers" was performed the most by students, followed by "upholding the three main pillars of the country: the nation, the religion, and the monarchy". This result is consistent with Thai social norms where children are expected to be grateful and obedient towards their parents, guardians and teachers. It is believed that people who follow this norm are regarded as good individuals. In addition, this norm is the main anchor in life that Thai people exercise

until now (Thitimano, 2013). Moreover, the tenth value “practicing the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy of His Majesty the King” and the twelfth value “dedicating oneself to the public and the national benefit rather than to one’s own benefit” were exercised the least. This may be due to business- and self-oriented era, where technology bends the way of life of people and causes them to neglect the mores of society. As a result, to live a life in accordance with the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy of His Majesty the King and to take into account the public benefits may be rather difficult for students compared to other values. Moreover, these values themselves may be rather advanced and distant for young students and they may find them rather difficult to practice in a literal sense.

Furthermore, the study also demonstrated that elementary school students performed the 12 values more than those in other levels. It may be that elementary school students are more obedient to their parents and teachers; hence it is still possible for parents and teachers to instil these values into their children. On the contrary, the vocational certificate students behaved in compliance with the 12 values less than those at other levels since they are in adolescence, and are characteristically more prone to show disobedience (Spear, 2009). They are interested in the opposite

sex and their peers and are often impetuous and like to try new things, and so forth (Slavin, 2014). Therefore, it is more difficult to encourage them to follow and absorb the 12 values.

Suggestions

1. Following the study’s finding that the tenth value “practicing the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy of His Majesty the King” and the twelfth value “putting the public and national interest before personal interest” were hardly exercised by the students, teachers and parents should place more attention on encouraging their children to perform those values. Nevertheless, the values greatly performed by students, still, need to be enhanced.

2. The current study was carried out to examine the students’ perception towards and practice of the 12 values in northern educational institutions involving students and teachers from elementary, secondary, vocational and higher education. However, further studies conducted in kindergarten are highly suggestive. Kindergarten students should be exposed to the basics of good attributes and values as early as possible in their personal development.

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